

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News-Writers* and
Petty-Statesmen, of all Sides.

Saturday, August 12. 1704.

Possibly they that call'd the Author of these Papers *French* Pensioner before, will call him *Polish* Pensioner now — And 'tis all one — The Thread of this Undertaking must describe it self; and according to the first pretence, I shall keep an unbarra'd freedom, without any regard to Censure, Foreign or Domestick; neither afraid of unjust Oppression, nor Courtting Partial Favour, equally defying Fear and Hope, and every thing but Truth.

The Author pretends to no extraordinary Gift of Instruction, but while detetting the Contradictions in the Politicks of this hoodwink'd Age, is the Work before him; he thinks himself in his proper Duty, and hopes no People, either abroad or at home, will think themselves concern'd, in his saying, he resolves to go thro' with it.

He presumes so much on the Convulsive Invincible Power of Truth, that he expects it will bear it self up, and him upon it, above the Waves and Storms of all the Seas of Faction and Parties, he may be obliged to Steer thro'; and if not, he resolves to venture the shipwreck.

He doubts not to force, even those People that will not Præsume what his Arguments move to, yet at the same time to confess they are just, and to own the reason of them.

How can he that Writes nothing but Truth offend? Who can be displeased with him, and what hazards can he run? Truth can never break the Law, and therefore can never Merit Pu-

nishment. As for inconvenient, unseasonable Truth, that must be left to discretion; and I'll take as much care of it as I can: The Times when Truth is out of Season, are very few, and really not half so many as People would make them.

The Affairs of *Sweden* and *Poland* have taken a new Turn, even while these Papers are Writing; and for this reason I think them the more seasonable.

I have observ'd all along, our Advocates for the *Swedes* have insisted upon it, that the King of *Sweden* came into *Poland* to restore their Liberties, Invaded by King *Augustus*, and that whereas King *Augustus* was not Chosen by free Suffrage, neither Legally Crown'd, nor fairly Possess'd; the *Poles* under the Protection of the *Swedes*, should be restored to an Entire freedom of Acting; that according to this Liberty, to which they were led by the hand, they had Dethron'd and Renounc'd their King, and proceeded now as an unrestrained People, all together free and unaffected, either by Foreign or Domestick Force, to the Election of a King of their own.

And thus these Gentlemen gild over a fine Story with *Revolution Language*, and bring the Parallel from *England*, make the *Polish* Diet act our Convention, and the King of *Sweden* the late King *William*.

These are fine-spun Notions, and serve to talk over at a distance; but we are beholden

to the King of *Sweden* for explaining all this Riddle.

Have not the *Poles* been Acted by the forcible Arguments of *Swedish* Troops of Horse, raising Contributions on their Lands? Have they not received the Proposal of Dethroning their Prince, from the Mouth of the *Swedish* Cannon? Have not the Promises of Ceasing the Exactions, of a powerful Assistance, and the like, been added to the Threatnings of Fire and Sword?

Has not the *Swedish* Commissioner refused to treat with the Republick, till they have agree'd to renounce their Allegiance to King *Augustus*? What Arguments can a Prince use with a People other than Threats and Promises? Can a Nation be said to be restor'd to its freedom, that is under the Influence of a Foreign Army, and acted by the Force of Promises and Threatnings?

Even the Confederates themselves, tho' they were prevail'd with at last, to renounce their Allegiance, with what Reluctance did they do it? were they not Huf't into it, with Threatning to Destroy their Estates, and Wheedled into it with Promises of quitting the Country; and yet how often did they insist upon it, that the *Swedes* should first perform that Promise?

At last, by the Powerful Influence aforesaid, they are prevail'd with to Declare the *Interregnum*, Abandon their Allegiance, and League against their Prince; then the *Swede* with the same, tho' very same Pretences proceeds to press them to an Election of a New King; and here 'tis very observable again, with what Reluctance the Nation proceeds to these Extremities, not that their Disloyalty to their Prince was less than before, but they saw themselves deceived; they had acted the Villany, but miss'd the Reward. The *Swede* who drove at all, would not Perform a Tittle, till the Scabbard was thrown away, and till the *Poles* had Seal'd their Treason, by naming an Usurper.

Here they stuck fast, till both sides being obstinate, the whole Design was in Danger to break up, and the People began to look back again; and now the Vizor's thrown off, the *Swede* Marches to *Warsaw* 40000 strong, to help the *Poles* choose a King; that is in short, to restore them to their Liberty, by forcing them to set up an Usurping Subject in the Throne of his Master.

Thus the *Polish* Liberty is restored, and the Election is made; their Masters, the *Swedes*, drawn up in Arms, looking on within a hundred Yards of the spot, to see if they dare re-

fuse it, like the School-Master that sets his Boys a Task, and stands over them with the Rod in his hand to see them perform it.

Here is *Polish* Liberty restor'd, by *Swedish* Generosity — The Force is so Great, that even the Disloyal Cardinal and General Disown and Protest against it. But say the Accounts now from thence, they have Complied, Yes: and very good reason to be given for it, the *Swedes* being ready with Fire and Sword to Ravage their Estates, if they did not: *This is the restoring Polish Liberty.* The City of *Dantzick*, which I cannot but think has been too much Deserted in this Case, is an Instance of *Polish* Freedom, where they are Threatened by Count *Steinbock* the *Swedish* General, made by Force to stop the Revenues of the King of *Poland*, and pay them to the *Swede*; then to refuse to pray for him; and last of all, to renounce their Allegiance to him.

If all this does not amount to the imposing a King upon the *Poles*, by Force, and whether they will or no; then I can give no Account of Liberty, and know nothing of the difference between Force and Consent in the World.

Here therefore must be a Termination of that weak Pretence, that the King of *Sweden* fights merely to recover, or to assist the Republick in the recovering the Liberties of *Poland*, since I believe no Man will Dispute with me, whether the Republick would have Chosen the *Palatin of Posen*, King, if the *Swedes* had left them to an absolute Freedom of Choice.

'Tis too plain to me, that the pretended Diet at *Warsaw*, for it can be no more, were either so divided among themselves, that they would have made no Choice at all, or at least would have been too far acted by the Spirit of Jealousy, to have Chosen one out of their own Number; and I will not answer for it, that they would not have Chosen any Prince in *Europe*, that would have given most Money for it.

But as I have been very tender of the Reputation of the King of *Sweden*; so I would fain have made him a fair Gamester in this War, if I could; and I cannot for my Life defend the Honour of his Proceeding in all this.

To fight his Enemy, and make War upon him, I have all along allow'd he had an undoubted Right to do, and a very great Provocation; I have allow'd as much as is possible to the Justice of his Cause, but a just War may be carry'd on in an unjust Manner.

For a King who has Subjects of his own, and may come to have it be his own Case, to stir up the Subjects of his Enemies, nay, and force them to dethrone him, depose him, and place one of his own Subjects on his Throne; What must those Gentlemen call this, who plead here that 'tis not Honourable for us to assist the *Camisars*, because 'tis an abetting of Treason and Rebellion?

The Legality by any Method in time of War to annoy the Enemy, may go far in this Case, and indeed is the only Argument can be made use of here; but there is some difference between assisting Subjects of their own accord taking up Arms for the most just Defence of their Lives and Religion, and on the other hand, pushing Subjects as it were by force, upon Dethroning their Prince, and open War against him, without so much as making a Demand of him.

What a Jest do these Northern Nations make of the *Jus Divinum* of Kings? If Crowns are Sacred, and the Princes that hold them become so, then for one King to pull down another, is to *Unhallow* the very Office, and acknowledge it *Mortal in Jurisdiction*.

The *Romans*, who sent back their Enemies Traytors to be Punish'd by the Government they would have betray'd, had certainly a different Sense of Honour from his *Swedish* Majesty; If the King of *Poland* has been the Aggressor, why has he not pursued him by his Armies, and beaten him fairly out of his Dominions, instead of Spending Two Summers, in Raising Rebellion and Mutiny against him, by his own Subjects, and Building his Conquests on the Perjury of a Convention of Rebels?

Why do we Revile the *French* King for abetting, or, as some will have it, contriving the Assassination of the Late King *William*? because, say we, it is a Benefect beyond what is Christian, and below a Man, much less a King,

to attempt to Murder those we cannot Conquer.

To raise Rebellions and private Mutinies in a Nation, is the very next Step to Assassinating the Person of the Prince, and in its Degree equally Dishonourable. 'Tis true, the *Swedes* have pursued and beaten the King of *Poland*, but they have not beaten him, if they have not quite beaten him; and it Implies now that They find They cannot do it, since they slack the Pursuit of him by Arms, and descend to apply to his own Seditious Subjects, to do it for them; Nay, and to bribe, invite, encourage, and persuade them to be Seditious, to Rebel against the Prince to whom they have Sworn Allegiance.

Nor can Revolution Principles be alledg'd here; the Male Administrations pretended are such as we see Four Parts in Five of the Nation acquiesc'd with; These are but a few Exasperated Rebels, and would not dare to show their Faces against their Prince, were they not back'd by his Foreign, Powerful, Invading Enemy.

But the King of *Poland* is a Tyrant.

First, I would rather have any Body should say so, than the *Swedes*; whose Government is the most Absolute, Despotick, and Tyrannick of any I know; and if they had not had the happiness of Great and Generous Princes, the People must be given up to all Sorts of Misery.

Secondly, if all Tyrants must be Depos'd, The Lord have Mercy upon most of the Kings of Europe.

The Liberty of Nations is sunk very low, and saving these happy Kingdoms, I know not where we can say it is to be found.

In our next the Article of Tyranny may be a little further consider'd.

ADVICE from the Scandal. CLUB.

ADVICE was brought to the Society, that there was an Addition of four New Papers added this Week to the Throng of Nonfence, with which the Town was plagu'd before.

The Society Declar'd, they were Sorry to find the Publick Follies encrease upon their hands; but were of the contrary opinion to the Gentleman that brought them the Advice, and therefore return'd him this Answer.

1. That 'tis a sufficient Authority for making Folks Fools, that they are willing to be made so.

2. That for the future, the Author of these Papers should stand foremost in their Books no more, since if Fools did not Read, Knaves would not Write, and there would be an end of us Authors all at a Blow.

3. That therefore the Society has had some thoughts

thoughts, whether the Multitude of Papers may not at last Reform the Mischief, by opening the Eyes of the People; as the Lotteries, which tho' first set up by the Government, at last by their Number became a Scandalous Grievance.

However, the Club could not but take notice of one of the New Gentlemen Authors, call'd the *Master-Mercury*, and observing that he appears in the World with a very great Stock of Assurance, under a Thundring Title, and abundance of great Things which he promises to do, bidding bold Defiance to all the World.

The Society are very sorry this Dogmatick Gentleman should give them occasion to be Rude with his very first Paper; and because they are willing to treat him as civilly as they can, at his first appearance, they only Order'd the following Question to be ask'd him.

That whereas he speaks in the First Person Singular, with an *I BELIEVE*, in the very first Article of his Paper, and jumps into Plurality of Persons, with a *WE MAY ENDEAVOUR* in the very same Page, the Society desires to know what kind of *Singular-Plural-Ungrammatical Monster* we are to understand him to be, and hopes he will Unmask himself in his next?

After this the Club, thought themselves oblig'd to give him a little friendly Advice, viz. That whereas he has promised to give us plain and Impartial Reflections, without Respect to Persons or Powers.

The Society assures him he will not be as good as his Word, or else that he ought to be very well prepared for Martyrdom; wherefore they advise him rather to break that Rash Promise, and ask the Worlds Pardon for making it, or else as my Lord Rochester said of *Bedlam*, *Newgate hath many Mansions*.

Governments will not be jested with, nor Reflected upon; nor is it fit they should always lye at the Mercy of every Pen, No; tho' there may be Room for it: and therefore tho' some Reflections may be just, and be better pleaded for than ordinary, yet an Universal Reflector must be a Publick Grievance, and will certainly be Treated accordingly.

Wherefore they advis'd him, to lay aside such a Rash Resolution; or if he will be obstinate, then they Counsel him to have always by him, ready for the Press, a *HYMN*, &c.

The Author of the *Gazette* was brought before the Society for a most Notorious Imposition upon the World.

He was told he had been always Civilly Treated with Respect to his Publication by Authority, and his Errors in Sense gently handled, but to commit Errors in Fact under the Publick Direction was Intolerable.

And to make out the Charge, the *Gazette* of August the 7th was produced, and Read; in the Article from *Deale*, he Writes thus —

Deale, August 5. A considerable Fleet of homeward bound Merchant Ships from Virginia arriv'd this Day in the Downs under Convoy of several of her Majesty's Ships.

Now whereas the *Virginia Fleet*, No, nor any part of them, was in the *Downs* till the 6th of *August*, they Voted his News False, and Pernicious, and Entred him in their Book of Scandal, *Fol. 7.* Obliging him also, That if any Misfortune happen'd to any Ship of that Fleet, and the Owners suffer'd for want of Ensuring, presuming they were arriv'd according to the *Gazette*, he should make good the Damage.

Advertisements are taken in by *J. Matthews* in *Filkington-Court in Little-Britain.*

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Just publish'd.

The Jubilee-Necklace: Or, a Present from C. III. to the D. of M. A Satyr. Printed for Ben. Bragg in Avenary-Lane.